



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ROGER BERLINER
COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT

CHAIR, TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE,
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

November 14, 2011

Ms. Krista Di Iaconi
Principal
JBG Rosenfeld Retail
4445 Willard Avenue, Suite 700
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Dear Ms. Di Iaconi,

Thank you for meeting with me recently to discuss in detail your company's plans for the Pike Center property on Rockville Pike. I was grateful for the opportunity to learn more about your project and to discuss the issues surrounding that proposal with you.

As I shared with you from our very first conversation regarding your project, I remain deeply concerned that your proposed development of this site with an 80,000 square foot single story Walmart 1500 feet from the Twinbrook Metro is inconsistent with the best practices of transit oriented development (TOD). Our community and our Council worked hard to begin transforming Rockville Pike from a throw back to the suburbia of the 50's to the dynamic, pedestrian and bike friendly new urbanism as envisioned by our White Flint sector plan. In my view, your project would lock in for years to come a key parcel in the next phase of Rockville Pike's redevelopment, White Flint II, into the old suburban, car dependent model on a corridor where we are making transit a priority. We simply must do better than a single story, traffic generating, stand-alone big box retail establishment on this site.

As you know, White Flint II is on our Planning Board's agenda in the near term. It is expected that the Council will conclude its work in 2013. It is universally understood that the type of enlivened, pedestrian friendly mixed use development, with greater densities, that characterize White Flint I will be at the heart of White Flint II. Accordingly, I believe it is inappropriate to move forward on this key TOD site at this moment in time with the limitations of the existing C-4 zoning and would ask you to delay any commitment to Walmart or any other big box store until White Flint II is concluded.

Should you decide to move forward in the near term and forego the opportunities for increased density and mixed use zoning that could be realized in the White Flint II plan, I will explore a zoning text amendment that would preserve our county's ability to ensure that this site is developed consistent with transit oriented development and the new vision of Rockville Pike that White Flint I and White Flint II will help realize.

I do regret that you face short term financial issues that make the Walmart option particularly appealing. However, my responsibilities, and the responsibility of my colleagues and our county, is to look to our future and ensure that our land use decisions are consistent with our long term goals for our community as a whole. In my personal view, your current proposal is inconsistent with and would serve as a setback to our commitment to transforming Rockville Pike into an enlivened, walkable, pedestrian friendly community.

I look forward to your response and to continuing this dialogue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Berliner', written over a horizontal line.

Roger Berliner
Councilmember - District 1

cc: Francoise Carrier, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
Rollin Stanley, Director, Montgomery County Planning Department
Isiah Leggett, County Executive